

AMENDMENTS

In The Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A spinal implant, comprising:
~~the implant including~~ a porous component₁ and
one or more fibrous filling elements provided within the porous component.
2. (Currently Amended) The implant of claim 1₁ in which the implant is at least one of a partial nucleus pulposus replacement ~~[[or]]~~ and a total nucleus replacement.
3. (Currently Amended) The implant of claim 1₁ ~~or claim 2~~ in which the porous component is a ~~bag or other form of~~ container having an opening to permit the insertion of the one or more fibrous filling elements.
4. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1₁ in which the porous container is made of fabric, ~~particularly a woven fabric.~~
5. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1₁ in which ~~the pores in the~~ porous component is configured with pores having ~~have~~ at least one cross-sectional dimension that is less than ~~[[the]]~~ a smallest cross-sectional dimension of the fibrous filling elements.
6. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1₁ in which the porous component is at least one of configured₁ ~~and/or~~ formed of₁ and ~~[[or]]~~ provided with one or more materials intended to promote tissue growth, particularly tissue ingrowth through at least one of the porous component₁ ~~and/or~~ between the porous component and one or more of the filling elements₂ and ~~[[or]]~~ between two or more of the fibrous filling elements.
7. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1₁ in which one or more materials used in the porous component is bio-absorbable.

8. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the bio-absorbable material is used to decrease over time at least one of the amount of porous component present, ~~and/or~~ positions at which the porous component is present, and ~~and/or~~ density at which the porous component is present ~~over time~~.
9. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the bio-absorbable material restrains the porous component in a first state, the bio-absorption of the material allowing the porous component to assume a second state.
10. (Canceled)
11. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the one or more fibrous filling elements ~~that are provided as at least one of porous, and/or define~~ defining voids within themselves, and ~~and/or~~ defining voids between parts of ~~[[a]] the one or more fibrous filling elements element are provided.~~
12. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the one or more fibrous filling elements are formed of at least one of unconstrained ~~fibres~~ fibers, ~~and/or~~ unbraided ~~fibres~~ fibers, and ~~and/or~~ interlaced ~~fibres~~ fibers.
13. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the one or more fibrous filling elements are provided with aligned ~~fibres~~ fibers.
14. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the one or more fibrous filling elements are provided ~~[[.]] as at least one of for instance wavy, and/or curved, and/or~~ zig zag ~~fibres~~ fibers.

15. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the one or more fibrous filling elements ~~with fibres which~~ act to space the fibrous filling elements apart from each other from one another are provided.
16. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the one or more fibrous filling elements are provided with ~~fibres of~~ fibers having two or more different cross sections ~~are provided.~~
17. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the one or more fibrous filling elements ~~with fibres provided~~ are provided as a plurality of fibers aligned in a first direction are provided, with one or more restraining ~~fibres or material fibers~~ which ~~surround and / or enclose and / or be~~ are wrapped around ~~and / or contact a the~~ plurality of ~~fibres~~ fibers.
18. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 17, in which the plurality of fibers ~~one or more filling elements~~ are provided with peripheral ~~fibres~~ fibers which are or material provided around the filling element, the peripheral fibres or material being wrapped around the ~~filling elements~~ plurality of fibers in at least one of a spiral manner and [[/ or]] a criss-cross manner.
19. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the one or more fibrous filling elements are provided with pieces provided therein, the pieces being intermixed with the one or more ~~fibres~~ fibrous filling elements.
20. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 19, in which the pieces are at least one of spheres, beads, and blocks ~~or the like.~~
21. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the fibrous filling elements are configured with at least one of pores, and/or voids, and/or apertures, and [[/or]] gaps occurring in the fibrous filling elements ~~and/or there between~~ that are due

- to at least one of the manner of manufacture of the ~~material from which it is formed~~
fibrous filling element, and or are supplemented supplementation with further pores,
and/or voids, and/or apertures, ~~[[or]]~~ and gaps.
22. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which the one or more
fibrous filling elements are ~~configured and/or~~ formed with at least one of one or more
materials intended to promote tissue growth, particularly tissue ingrowth through at least
one of the one or more fibrous filling elements, ~~and/or~~ between the porous component
and one or more filling elements, ~~and~~ ~~[[or]]~~ between two or more of the fibrous filling
elements.
23. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 22, in which the one or more
materials used in one or more of the fibrous filling elements are bio-absorbable and the
bio-absorbable material is used to decrease over time at least one of the amount of one or
more fibrous filling elements present, and ~~and/or~~ positions at which one or more fibrous
filling elements is present, and ~~and/or~~ density at which the one or more fibrous filling
elements is present ~~overtime~~.
24. (Currently Amended) The implant of ~~any preceding~~ claim 23, in which the bio-absorbable
material restrains one or more of the fibrous filling elements, ~~or a part thereof~~, in a first
state, the bio-absorption of the material allowing the one or more fibrous filling elements,
~~or a part thereof~~, to assume a second state, the second state providing at least one of a
greater internal volume for the one or more fibrous filling elements, ~~and/or~~ greater
porosity for the one or more fibrous filling elements, ~~and/or~~ reduction in mass of the one
or more fibrous filling elements, and to ~~and/or~~ provide more space for tissue ingrowth.
25. (Currently Amended) ~~A surgical technique in which, at least part of a spinal disc is~~
~~removed and an implant is provided, the implant having a porous component and one or~~
~~more filling elements provided within the porous component~~ A method for performing
spine surgery for partial replacement of a nucleus of an intervertebral disc, comprising:

gaining access to the nucleus through an incision;
removing at least part of the nucleus to create a space;
inserting an implant into the space, the implant including an outer component
manufactured at least in part of fabric and reduced to a small size to allow insertion into
the space without enlarging the incision; and
inserting at least one fibrous filling element into the outer component during
surgery to expand the outer component.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently Amended) ~~A technique according to any of claims 25 to 27~~ The method of claim 25, in which the ~~technique method~~ method includes a first time in which the implant provides ~~one or more characteristics~~ at least one characteristic of a naturally occurring disc by virtue of a non-biological mechanism, and a second time at which the implant provides ~~one or more characteristics~~ at least one characteristic of a naturally occurring disc by a combination of a non-biological mechanism and biological mechanism.

29. (Currently Amended) ~~A technique according to~~ The method of claim 28, in which the ~~technique method~~ method includes a third time with substantially all of the one or more characteristics of a naturally occurring disc are provided by a biological mechanism.

30. (Currently Amended) ~~A technique according to~~ The method of claim 28, ~~or claim 29~~ in which the transition from the mechanism at the first time to the second time ~~and/or third time~~ is due to bio-absorption of one or more of the materials forming the implant and particularly forming the one or more fibrous filling elements ~~thereon~~.